DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 043 539 SO 000 268

AUTHOR Zodikoff, David
TITLE Suggested Models for Developing Social Studies Comprehension.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Cortland. Coll. at Cortland.
PUB DATE 70
NOTE 8p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.50
DESCRIPTORS *Affective Objectives, Attitudes, *Cognitive Objectives, Comprehension Development, *Concept Teaching, Interdisciplinary Approach, *Social Studies, *Teaching Models, Values

ABSTRACT

Outlined are three instructional models that were developed in a pre-service social studies course for junior year education majors. These interrelated models are structured as heuristic paradigms so that different types of content can be included within relevant areas. Specific attitudes, concepts, and skills are related to appropriate content from the social sciences --economics, geography, history, political science, sociology. The attitude-content model is concerned with five attitude areas: social responsibility, independent thinking, democratic living, empathy, and group cooperation. The concept-content model considered both the emotional and intellectual levels of concept comprehension. Accordingly, the skill-content model included affective and cognitive objectives. (SBE)

ED043539

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION
& WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Suggested Models for Developing Social Studies Comprehension

Dr. David Zodikoff

SØ 000 268

The three instructional models, included in this report, have been developed by the author with his students in a pre-servic social studies course for college juniors that are education majors. All three of these models are structured as types of heuristic paradigms. That is, there are many different types of content that can be included within relevant areas. A basic value of these models is that teachers are offered a structural design before, as well as during, their teaching efforts. Also, in the area of evaluation, it would seem that teachers can more clearly define learning success if they have identified specific conceptual, attitude, and skill areas.

Figure I is an attitude-content model that the author has used with many undergraduates for open-ended discussion purposes. The basic use of this model requires the relevant connection of specific content from various social science disciplines with a specific attitude. The five attitude areas in the model have the following operational definitions:

1. social responsibility or respect for obligation to obey the rules of the home, school, and community.
2. independent thinking or the desire to think on a more individual level.
3. democratic living or the growth of improved attitudes toward increasing respect for other people's equal rights.
4. empathy or developing the ability to relate and identify more closely with other people's situations.
5. group cooperation or developing more favorable

attitudes toward working more effectively with others.[1]

Each of the topics in the model are broad and open-ended to encourage continuous research and assimilation. Teachers should develop these attitudes in the meaning sense defined by Edwards and Remmers. Edwards defined an attitude as "the degree of positive or negative feeling expressed about some psychological object."[2] Remmers defined an attitude as "a felt idea or group of ideas which sets persons to act in relation to specific objects that arouse such feelings."[3]

As a result of an attitude questionnaire study dealing with the five mentioned attitude areas administered to 245 fourth, fifth and sixth grade children, the attitude of independent thinking had the lowest favorable attitude score in comparison with the other four attitude areas. Therefore, the use of such a model as shown in Figure I might help to develop more favorable attitudes in children and their teachers.

Figures II and III have been used with same structural rationale as Figure I. That is, specific concepts and skills have been related to appropriate content from the various social sciences. Ideally, the skills model should be interwoven, meaningfully with the attitudes and concepts models.

Allport defined a concept as "any intellectualized category on any given understood mental level, by the learner, and that any concept has both an emotional and/or intellectual level of comprehension."[4] It is vital that teachers of young children are aware of this dual comprehension level of concepts, as children learn something first on an affective level, and learn to intel-

lectualize or apply verbal labels at later maturity. In the elementary school social studies programs, children in the early primary grades can develop democratic attitudes in a classroom before they can verbalize the meaning of these experiences. If teachers waited until children could verbalize such abstract terms, then it may be too late. Although no complete panaceas are claimed for any of these models, they should promote greater intellectual and emotional growth, if used by teachers who are willing to innovate and change themselves.

Figure I

Attitudes Model

	Social Responsibility	Independent Thinking	Democratic Living	Empathy	Group Cooperation
History	Constitution and its demands	Civil disobedience	Rural-urban living	feelings for immigrants	Westward expansion
Geography	Laws of Nature and laws of man	How to improve land	Utilitarianism	Aid to underdeveloped countries	Imperial Valley
Sociology	group interdependence and work in social groups	Possible reformed class system	How can groups function better	Welfare Laws	Rigidity of social order
Economics	Careful use of money	How to avoid inflation	Concept of exploitation	Government supports	Balanced Economy
Political Science	Proper use of authority	How do governments vary	Study of civil disobedience	Rights of all citizens	Rights and respect of individual citizens

Figure II

Concepts Model

History
1. Past events cause present conditions in history.
2. Great leaders helped change their times as wellas being affected by them.
3. Certain events in history can drastically change future directions.

Geography
1. Man and his physical enviornment are interdependent.
2. The location of an area greatly determines the people's way of life.
3. Natural resources are distributed unevenly around the world.

Political Science
1. In a democracy, people help to make laws.
2. Certain laws are necessary if a society is to function.
3. Our American government works on a checks and balance system.

Economics
1. As prices rise, the real value of a dollar goes down.
2. When demand exceeds supply, the cost of goods will be high.
3. Conservation of natural resources helps a country to stay strong.

Sociology
1. The family is a primary social human institution.
2. American society is made up of many different ethnic, social and economic groups.
3. In an open society, a person can rise socially by his ability, unlike a closed society where social status is determined by birth rather than ability.

Figure III

Skills Model

1. History - structure - study the relationships between past persons, times, and events.
   skills - (a). ability to differentiate primary and secondary sources.
   (b). ability to critically evaluate validity of sources.
   (c). ability to judge ideas or studied evidence rather than opinion.
   (d). ability to write brief biographies without eulogizing or debunking.
   (e). ability to interpret and write time line charts.

2. Geography - structure - approach by culture, physical location, economic wealth, political name
   skills-(a). to locate specific areas of the world.
   (b). to define and apply technical terms such as latitude, longitude, hemisphere and others
   (c). to demonstrate the use of scale and key on maps.
   (d). to define and apply the concept of distortion and different uses of homoloscene, mercator, polar maps.
   (e). to explain the effect of location on climate and types of living.

3. Political Science - structure - local, state, national, international political structures
   skills -(a). how and why governments at each level are so organized.
   (b). how checks and balances system operates and its advantages and disadvantages.
   (c). to contrast types of government such as dictatorship, democracy, monarchy.
   (d). to define and apply parts and function of the constitution.
   (e). the meaning of citizenship including rights and duties.

4. Economics - structure - approach by individual, local, state, national, international economic problem areas.
   skills-(a). to define and apply key terms such as Gross National Product, money income, real income, and theory of supply and demand.
   (b). how the areas of government and economics are interdependent.
   (c). how the areas of geography and economics are interdependent.
   (d). how the areas of sociology and economics are interdependent.
   (e). what attitudes in terms of economics and its uses affect our social classes

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Zodikoff, David, "A Questionnaire Scale Study of Social Attitudes of Intermediate Grade Children," Counseling and Personnel Services Information Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, March 1970, ERIC Clearinghouse Document Number CG 005 673.

2. Edwards, Allen L., Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957, 256 pp.

3. Remmers, H. H., Introduction to Opinion and Attitude Measurement, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1954, 431 pp.

4. Allport, Gordon W., The Nature of Prejudice, New York, Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1958, 496pp.